

## **SUNNYBELL CEDAR GLADE**

### **CLASS II NATUARAL-SCIENTIFIC STATE NATURAL AREA**

**COUNTY:** Rutherford

**7.5' QUADRANGLE:** Walterhill

**PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:**  
Central Basin

**ACREAGE:** 36

**OWNERSHIP:** The Nature Conservancy

**YEAR DESIGNATED:** 1995

**DESCRIPTION:** Sunnybell Cedar Glade is a 36-acre natural area located in the Central Basin of Middle Tennessee, twelve miles north of Murfreesboro in Rutherford County. This site supports a rare assemblage of glade endemic plant species found only at a small number of other locations in Middle Tennessee. The natural area is named for the sunnybells (*Schoenolirion croceum*) that are prominent in wet calcareous limestone washes of cedar glades. In springtime the sunnybells flower profusely and create a remarkable sight. Other rare plants that have been identified from this site include glade cleft phlox (*Phlox bifida ssp stellaria*), Tennessee milk-vetch (*Astragalus tennesseensis*), evolulus (*Evolvulus nuttallianus*), and pale umbrella-wort (*Mirabilis albida*).

Cedar glades are characterized by openings in cedar-oak-hickory forest where the soil is very shallow, and often associated with karst topography. Growing conditions in these glades are very harsh, and only a few highly specialized plants adapt to these conditions. Even the more common tree species that occur in glade ecosystems like red cedar, hackberry, southern shagbark hickory and the various oaks are stunted. Like many other cedar glades of Middle Tennessee, Sunnybell Cedar Glade is underlain by Lebanon limestone formations deposited during the Ordovician Period about 500 million years ago. This is karst topography with little relief as characterized by exposed limestone outcroppings.

**SITE MANAGEMENT:** The Nature Conservancy, Tennessee Chapter, 2021 21<sup>st</sup> Ave., South, Suite C 400, Nashville, TN 37212, phone (615) 383-9909. Division of Natural Heritage, 401 Church Street, 14th Floor L&C Tower, Nashville, TN 37243, phone (615) 532-0431.

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